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Council Bluffs, Iowa

1856 - 1956

A Regional Chronicle by J. R. Perkins

Illustrated by John Andrews

Introduction by L. W. Ross

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Perkins, Jacob R.

A regional chronicle, Council Bluffs Savings Bank, 1856-1956. Illustrated by John Andrews.

[46] p. illus. 31 cm.

88126 ✓
86883 ✓

cop. 2

Cover title: Yesterday, today and tomorrow.

1. Council Bluffs, Iowa--Hist. 2. Council Bluffs Savings Bank--Centennial. I. Yesterday, today and tomorrow. II. Andrews, John, illus.

Council Bluffs Savings Bank

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Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow



FOREWORD



SEVERAL years prior to the publication of this brochure plans were in the making to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the Council Bluffs Savings Bank. In the vast scheme of things one hundred years is but brief, for men are living here today whose lives cover more than two-thirds of a century and to them the events seem but yesterday.

But in this one hundred years Council Bluffs has grown from a border town of two thousand to a beautiful, progressive city of upwards of 50,000. As the Council Bluffs Savings Bank has played an important role, almost from the beginning, in the total development it was felt we would be remiss if the story were not recorded for posterity in more permanent form.

We were fortunate that J. R. Perkins was available and willing to study the sources and write the manuscript. For in October of 1928 he had completed a biography of General Grenville Mellen Dodge, one of the co-founders of the banking firm of Baldwin and Dodge. It was from this little banking venture that the Savings Bank evolved. Therefore, we felt that no one was better qualified to write this regional chronicle.

Then we discovered John Andrews, who has drawn the illustrations and entered into the spirit of the task with the same intense desire for accuracy and authenticity. So as a team their qualifications herewith may speak for themselves.

Although they were "carrying the ball" much credit should go to those who were "running interference" — to Miss Germaine Krettek and her efficient library staff; to Laverne Tollinger, Edwin Spetman, Jr., Everett Shockey from the Bank, and many others too numerous to mention.

Since moving into this building in December of 1941, our footings have increased more than five times, from something over \$5,000,000 to around \$25,000,000 in fifteen years. Our capital accounts at this time totaled \$435,000 and now are more than \$1,700,000.

None can predict what will happen in the next one hundred years, but signs on the horizon presage even greater advances. One may confidently expect this because of the progress that has been made in the last five years. This progress is due partly to an aggressive group of young people who have the confidence of an older and more established generation.

Dreams have been realized during the period for which the older generation has worked and sacrificed; this, too, in the face of most discouraging obstacles which would have caused men of less fortitude to give up long ago.

The accomplishments are impressive. Some of the changes for the better include the harnessing of the Missouri River, eliminating the possibility of future floods; the building of the Broadway viaduct;

the adoption of the city manager plan, with its many tangible and intangible benefits; the support for and the acquisition of an ideal industrial site; the building of an electric generating plant that assures adequate power for expansion beyond our fondest dreams; the erection of hundreds of new homes; the paving and resurfacing of over one hundred fifty blocks within the corporate limits; the building of new schools and churches and the remodelling of old ones.

So we, both of Council Bluffs and its surrounding territory, may be likened to a group who have been climbing a mountain. At times the going was rough and discouraging; at certain other periods it was easier; then for some years we seemed to move at a certain level, though probably descending somewhat below the

norm of other times. For people became tired and discouraged; they looked down at the distance they had travelled and then up at the steep ascent ahead and some seemed to have turned back; others—most of them younger—looked backward and then forward and said, "We are going on to greater heights."

Thus as we start on our second century we, of the Council Bluffs Savings Bank, determine to be among those who are going on up; and as the largest bank in Southwestern Iowa and the oldest bank of one continuous line in the state, we pledge our continued support to Council Bluffs and its territory and we will guard jealously our position as the cornerstone of strength and progress.

—Lewis W. Ross, President



"We'll Call This Council Bluff"

THE KEELBOAT, 55 feet in length and manned by 11 skilled Missouri river oarsmen, shot shoreward and nosed to an inlet at the foot of a high bluff. It was mid-morning, late in July, 1804. Two young men in baggy military uniforms stepped ashore and climbed to the top of the hill. After gazing up and down the Missouri they wrote in their now historic JOURNAL: "The most beautiful prospect of river, up and down — and the country opposite—presented itself. No other situation is so well calculated for a trading establishment." The scene was a hilltop

somewhere between modern Omaha and Fort Calhoun. The young men in uniform were Lewis and Clark, on their way up the Missouri on an expedition of exploration for the U. S. Government. The "country opposite," as they looked eastward across the river, was the future location of Council Bluffs.

Descending the hill, Lewis and Clark gave orders for their crew to make camp and began a rather anxious wait for the coming of certain Indian chiefs who dwelt north of the mouth of the Platte. For,

from the day the big keelboat passed the Platte, the white men had been under the observation of the red men. Only in a vague sort of way did the tribes along the Missouri know what the presence of Lewis and Clark meant. For it had been but ten months since President Thomas Jefferson and cabinet bargained with France for the vast territory now known as the "Louisiana Purchase" — a million square miles of land where the aboriginals had dwelt for untold centuries. It was one of the missions of Lewis and Clark to make known to all tribal chiefs they met that a new "Great White Father" ruled, desiring peace, not war. But their chief mission was to determine if the Missouri river ran on to the Pacific Ocean, which the government seemed to have believed. Jefferson had sensed the coming struggle with Great Britain for the control of the fur trade of

the Northwest and knew how important a continuous water route would be in the control of it.

Three days after Lewis and Clark made this particular camp the Indian chiefs came and a "powwow" was held. The explorers, later, wrote in their JOURNAL: "The incident just related induced us to give this place the name of the Council Bluff." And this was the origin of the name of our own historic city whose story is so interwoven with the beginning of the white man's social order on the upper-Missouri. For the "country opposite" in the words of Lewis and Clark, has, in a little more than a century, lifted from an Indian trading-post to a city whose historic past is second to none in Middle America.

Wang-e-waha, Council Bluffs' First Merchant

WHEN a German prince, Maximilian of Wied, journeyed up the Missouri in 1832, he saw a deserted Indian village somewhere within the limits of modern Council Bluffs and wrote in his Journal: "The inhabitants, on the death of their chief, returned farther down."

The dead chief of whom the German traveler referred was "Wang-e-waha," who had ruled a remnant of the "Ioways" on the upper-Missouri. The French "voyageurs" who came up the river from St. Louis nicknamed him "Grand Batture" or "Big Sandbar." But his tribesmen called him "Hard Heart" for he dealt sternly with them.

Wang-e-waha conducted a trading post, perhaps as early as 1820, in a valley between two high bluffs just above our modern Mynster Springs — a place within the city limits. He operated independent of the big fur companies, not needing a government license to trade and trap as did the Cabanes of St. Louis, Manuel Lisa and other white men.

The "Ioways" he ruled, a remnant of the great tribe that had wandered for centuries between the Mississippi and the Missouri, were headed for extinction. Perhaps their chief's desertion of them, in a dispute over whether they should side with the British or the United States in the war of 1812, was a decisive factor in their disintegration. For Wang-e-waha was loyal to the "Great White Father" at Washington and most of the tribe favored the British. So their chief told them to shift for themselves and crossed the river to Nebraska territory and dwelt among the Otoes, who were kinsmen. Thus, Wang-e-waha becomes our first patriot in a place now historic for its patriots and noted for its military leaders.

Ten years after Wang-e-waha left his tribe, now less than 500 dispirited people, they begged him to return and rule over

them. He did so and established his trading post that became central in the village in the beautiful valley above modern Mynster Springs. For he insisted that his people farm as well as hunt and trap and, for another decade, the upper-Missouri river Ioways, in this sheltered and scenic area, held off disaster — disaster that was inevitable.

The main thing here to note was that the unnumbered years of Indian culture on the upper-Missouri was passing. True, the Pottawattamies would, in the middle 1830's, come from their ancestral home bordering Lake Michigan, and establish a culture of their own. But that culture would be based largely on the ways and wishes of the white men crowding westward to the Missouri River country, all of which is another story, soon to be told in these pages.

But what was about to pass was an Indian society, centuries old, that was of Sioux origin but composed of Omahas, Otoes, Pawnees, Poncas and the Ioways. Basically, it was a Great Plains social order of a bison culture, which means that the buffalo were — and had been from times remote — absolutely essential to Indian existence. For the tribes along the upper Missouri could not build as did the Mayan and Aztec societies of the southwest. The Plains Indians had to follow the buffalo and the grass, and no migratory people produce an architecture, nor do they, to any great extent, invent. So, from the beginning, these tribes were a hunting and trapping society; a robe-wearing, feather-decorating and bead and basket-weaving social order at best. They bartered with one another; then, when the white men came, the red men bartered with them. But neither "wampum" nor "token money" seems to have circulated. Yet, when Wang-e-waha ran his trading post he must have handled a few Spanish dollars. Thus, let's call him our first merchant and — banker!



Pottawattamie Powwow

ON a spring day of 1838 three men stood on a hilltop at the precise point where Broadway and Union streets now join and reached an agreement that holds a wealth of history. The men were Colonel S. W. Kearney of Fort Leavenworth, Father Pierre-Jean De Smet of St. Louis and "Sauganash," a half-breed chief of the Pottawattamies who had just been transferred from Illinois to western Iowa.

On the hill where they stood was a "Blockhouse" that troops from Colonel Kearney's command had built in 1837 as a point of defense against the Sioux who

bitterly resented the treaty that had brought 3,000 of the "Pottawattamie" to the upper-Missouri. For the Sioux had dominated this area, lording it over tribes related to the war-like "Dakota" just a hundred miles to the north.

The agreement reached by the soldier, the priest, and the chief of the Pottawattamies was that the blockhouse could be used as a Jesuit mission. For at the bottom of the hill, now a portion of Broadway, was the Indian village their chief had established for them. The soldiers from Fort Leavenworth called it "Cald-

well's Village" for this was the English name of the Pottawattamie chief, born in Detroit of an Irish Colonel in the British army and of a Pottawattamie princess. He had been educated in a Jesuit school, so Father De Smet found him highly cooperative in the work of the mission on the hill where now stands Council Bluffs, old Pierce Street Public School, now abandoned!

In a little more than a year after Father De Smet established his Indian Mission he was transferred to the Northwest and went on to wide fame. He returned on a visit about fourteen months later and was made unhappy by what he saw. For the white man's "Fire Water" flowed as freely as the Missouri and the Pottawattamies were withering under the impact of the white man's "civilization." Then, too, "Billy" Caldwell, their half-breed chief, was dead. His body was higher up the hill in the graveyard the Indians had made for their increasing dead. His skeleton was exhumed when Franklin street was cut through the hill and placed in the St. Joseph's cemetery many years ago.

"Sauganash," or Archibald Caldwell, was no ordinary half-breed, though this fact may have been his tragedy. In his youth he had been close to the warrior

"Tecumseh," his secretary and go-between in dealing with the U. S. government. When Tecumseh, favoring the British, was defeated and killed, Billy Caldwell went to live in the mushrooming town of Chicago and he must have made quite an impression on it. For Chicago's first hotel of any note was called the "Sauganash," and today there are about a dozen places, from medical centers to beauty salons, that bear the name "Sauganash."

It was in 1833 that the U. S. government made a treaty with the Pottawattamies, granting them five million acres in the Missouri River country in exchange for their ancestral lands bordering the Great Lakes. Nobody could foresee the tragedy inherent in such a move for this great tribe. Chief Sauganash and his two daughters, each with government pensions, came to western Iowa with their people. A chinked log house, not a "teepee," was their home, but not for long. For the government, within five years, insisted on another treaty with the Pottawattamies. So they began to stumble southwest to oblivion, as the Ioways had done, which may have broken the heart of their chief who died in 1841. For what is called "progress" was on its way westward.

The Mormons Reach the Missouri

MID-MAY, 1846. The vanguard of Mormons reach the Missouri. Behind them, stretched out across southern Iowa are thousands of others. The first company, led by Brigham Young, had left the banks of the Mississippi in early February with sleet coating their covered wagons. Three months later the Missouri was in sight. From a hilltop just north of where the Iowa School for the Deaf now stands the Mormons looked down on the floodplain of the river, a vast carpet of green splashed with Black-eyed Susan and shaded with tall cotton-woods whose tops were green-colored umbrellas turning in the wind.

But, between the Mississippi and the Missouri, there had been days of diseases and nights of unmerciful cold that outlasted camp-fires. Yet, these dispossessed people, matching the faith and courage of the Hebrew exodus out of the land of the Nile, bent before the storms, prayed above their sick and crept on westward to the lands of the Pottawattamie.

These were the men and women who were to lay the foundations of the first white social order on the upper-Missouri. Theirs was to be a strange but significant socio-religious experiment far removed from the centers, and even the fringes, of settled life. Why they came and what they did made up a vivid page of our national history. The story of the log town they built — Kaneshville — is interwoven with romance and realism; with triumph and tragedy, and with an over-all drama that has the lights and the shadows of a deathless saga.

Why the Mormons made the now historic trek from Nauvoo on the Mississippi to the bluffs on the Missouri and built the log town called Kaneshville is known only in faint outline by our own generation. Some knowledge of the forces that were in play should give us new appreciation

of the significance of movements that produced Council Bluffs.

Forced out of Illinois by social, religious and political factors 10,000 Mormons in 2,000 wagons crossed Iowa in 1846. The U. S. government gave them the privilege of settling on Indian lands provided they would furnish a battalion to serve in the war going on with Mexico. That battalion was recruited and drilled just north of the Iowa School for the Deaf one month after the Mormons reached the Missouri. That autumn the Mormons crossed the river and built a log town — “Winter Quarters” — where Florence, Nebraska now stands. The next spring, largely because of trouble with the Omaha Indians, the Mormons recrossed the Missouri and built another log town — “Kaneshville.” And what a town it became in five swift years, 1847-52!

Two chief factors made Kaneshville the most important point of the upper-Missouri. First, it was the assembling place of Mormons from all over the world, especially if traveling westward overland. Second, the discovery of gold in California at Sutters’ Mill. And how strange it was that soldiers of the Mormon Battalion that had marched to California in 1847 had, in 1849, played a part in the gold discovery.

Kaneshville mushroomed into a town of 16,000 before the Mormons left in 1852. Gold-seekers and God-seekers — Mormons and non-Mormons — in about equal numbers milled through the dusty streets of the log town, each “outfitting” for the hard and dangerous journey across the plains to the Rockies. Out of the confusion and uncertainty — a man, a Mormon preacher and editor of the Frontier Guardian, emerged to dominate the Kaneshville picture. For he was, for the Mormons of the Missouri, a stronger figure than Brigham Young. His name was Orson Hyde.

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Bartering In Kanesville

BARTER was basic in old Kanesville, the log town around which the modern city of Council Bluffs began to build. Barter was basic in the early 1850's because there were no bankers on the upper-Missouri.

Oxen, as this illustration depicts, were central in bartering. For an ox means what we call "beef" and was fundamental as food in the social economy of Kanesville. In fact, "beeves" were plentiful in early Pottawattamie county. The Mormons had driven large herds across Iowa,

wintering them in "brakes" on either side of the Missouri.

Pioneer Kanesville was not altogether a moneyless town. Mormons and non-Mormons who journeyed to western Iowa in the late 1840's brought some money. But, at first, there was little or nothing to buy. For those who came had come on the heels of a retreating Indian social order, one that had been, for centuries, a bartering society.

The social and economic problems of Kanesville were immediate. For between

the last Indian tepee and the first log house was an astonishing short time. It is not far from the truth to say that Kanessville was built over-night. In 1847 there was no town on the banks of Indian creek. In 1848 there was one, perhaps of 2,000 people.

Easily, the foremost figure in the new log town was Mormon preacher named Orson Hyde. Brigham Young had left him in charge of all Mormons on the upper-Missouri and he was no mere figurehead. He not only "bossed" Kanessville—he made his influence felt throughout western Iowa. His chief medium was a newspaper — the Frontier Guardian. It was a twice-a-month publication and its editor used it for two main purposes: first, to assemble Mormon emigrants; second, to make Kanessville the chief "outfitting" station of companies of "fortyniners" headed for the gold field. And he succeeded in both.

A close reading of copies of this pioneer newspaper reveals one of the most amazing social orders existing in old Kanessville of any mid-nineteenth century America. Here was a community that had suddenly erupted, not one that had grown normally. Its elements, especially after the discovery of gold in California, were decidedly mixed. One element, by and large, had a vision of God; the other a vision of Gold; a conflict was inevitable.

Editor Hyde met this problem, and all others, head-on. Short but pointed editorials lift the curtain for us on the actual

scene in old Kanessville from 1849 to 1852 when the last company of Mormons, led by Orson Hyde, left for Salt Lake. But before he uprooted himself from the Missouri river country he made Kanessville a bustling town in which evildoers feared him more than they did the officials of the new State of Iowa.

Here are a few of his barbed editorials. He denounced "wanton women with flowing veils" who rode into the woods with certain gold-seekers from back east. He castigated a man who opened a "dog-gery" not far from "Log Tabernacle" where Mormons worshipped. He bade Mormon girls to stay away from "Gentile dance halls" and pointed out that if they danced it should be under the auspices of the Mormon Church. He ferreted out a gang of "counterfeiters" and had their bogus money confiscated. He got into politics and swung western Iowa into the Whig column. And he was highly instrumental in the organization of Pottawattamie county.

But Orson Hyde had many social qualities. He wrote poetry, danced at a gay New Year's party, and wore "broad-cloth". For Kanessville had an English tailor who advertised his clothes. By this time, 1850, the town had six stores and the boats from St. Louis brought up most everything to be found in the big city itself. Then, almost suddenly, Kanessville was deserted by the Mormons and on its foundations another town — Council Bluffs — began to build.

When Kaneshville Became Council Bluffs

ON January 19, 1853, the Iowa Legislature authorized the citizens of Kaneshville to change its name to Council Bluffs. This was seven months after the Mormons exodus to Salt Lake. In those seven months is the story of the transition of the town from Mormon to non-Mormon rule. The dominance had been a sort of ecclesiastical one in which officials of the Mormon Church had played the leading role; henceforth, the civic pattern of the town would be something else. What?

Well, in the first place not all the Mormons left Kaneshville nor Pottawattamie county when Orson Hyde, in the spring of 1852, uprooted himself and led the last company of "Saints" to Salt Lake. Those that remained on the upper-Missouri had broken with the Utah group and were reforming into the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." One of the issues that led to this rift in the ranks of the Mormons was "plural marriage," which those who remained here wholly repudiated. This issue had risen sharply when the Mormons were making their trek across Iowa in 1846 and by the time they abandoned Kaneshville western Iowa had hundreds of dissenters from the doctrine of the plurality of wives.

The all-over picture in Kaneshville, even before the Mormons left, had undergone significant changes. Non-Mormon groups, chiefly from the companies of westward journeying gold seekers, made the difference. For some of them, noting that western Iowa was a gold mine of agricultural possibilities, went no farther westward in search of gold. It is in their story that we find the major factors of the social, economic and political changes — not omitting the religious — that began to reshape the social order of western Iowa with Kaneshville as the focal point.

Between the going of the Mormons, 1852, and the beginning of the Civil War, 1861, Council Bluffs received dissimilar social groups that were in sharp contrast

to the more or less unified social order the Mormons originally established on the upper-Missouri. Two of the new groups were from New England and the "South," and may well be designated as Puritan and Cavalier. In a certain sense it was the meeting of old foes on new fields, for they had been at outs ever since the adoption of the constitution.

Among the New England group was the Reverend George G. Rice, Council Bluffs' first Protestant pastor, a Congregationalist, a graduate of the University of Vermont and of Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He came as early as the autumn of 1851, under the auspices of the Home Missionary board of his denomination. On March 2, 1852, he bought a log house and half an acre where the Broadway theater now stands. On June 12th, 1853, he organized a church that worshipped in an adjoining log house. A Methodist preacher, Rev. William Simpson, shared the same church-house with George Rice. Both clergymen helped build churches for their denominations in 1854.

Rev. George Rice served as town councilman under the first non-Mormon mayor, Cornelius Voorhis; and one of the first things this group of aldermen did was to attempt to suppress gambling and regulate the liquor traffic, for the town was "wide open." Central in the fight was the Ocean Wave Saloon that stood where Broadway Methodist church is now located. The town church was knocked out and there was little organized government for a year. But when two fires, one on upper-Broadway and the other on Broadway between Pearl and Main, nearly ended the town's existence, the citizens quit fighting among themselves, formed a new government under Mayor C. E. Stone, and prospered. This was just before the coming of the Dodge family that was to make history, both in peace and war.



Blooming of the Bloomers

MID-APRIL, 1855. A little stern-wheel steamboat nosed the landing on lower Broadway. Deck hands got busy and pushed out a gangplank. The first woman to come down the plank was garbed as no woman was ever before garbed on a boat that touched at Council Bluffs. The dock loafers were goggle-eyed, for she wore beneath a *short* cape-like skirt a pair of loose trousers gathered closely about her ankles. A famous feminist of the middle 19th century had come to town. Nobody was interested in the man, her husband, who toted the valises at her heels.

That week the Bugle carried this item: "Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Bloomer arrived in our city Sunday. They have concluded to make our infant city their home, having already invested in property here. The blooming prairie, we doubt not, will suit the sensative and romantic task of one who has made herself well known as the founder of the Bloomer costume. The rig is well suited to the navigation of our western prairies."

Here was a woman 70 years ahead of her time, for the 19th amendment to the

constitution establishing "woman suffrage" came as late as 1919. To this pioneer settlement on the upper Missouri, Amelia Bloomer, just one hundred years ago, brought an issue, backed by her own vivid personality that would be hammered out in the hot fires of controversies that would divide families and trouble legislatures and stir churches.

The Bloomers — the man and his talented wife — made far more of an impression on the town than did her wearing of her odd costume. Both were well educated: he as a lawyer and she as a writer and lecturer. He wrote well, too, and "The Nonpareil," established the year after they came gave them ample outlet for their writings. The "Bugle" did also, though Bloomer held an editorial position for a time on the Nonpareil, a rival Republican paper that was out to offset the influence of the Democratic Bugle, ably edited by Lysander Babbitt.

It was something new for the pioneer town, and for the upper Missouri river country, for a woman to crowd Concert Hall at Broadway and Sixth or Babbitt's Hall a mile farther out Broadway and hear her discuss the questions of the day. Chief among them was the moral right of women to cast the ballot.

It is difficult for us of today to appreciate how revolutionary were Amelia Bloomer's ideas, even more so than the trousers she wore. So there was division

in the town over her as well as her startling costume. In the taverns the men would toss off their straight whiskey and declare, pontifically, "A woman's place is in the home." And one barroom bouncer was heard to say, "Amelia wears bloomers on the street and its ten to one that she wears the pants at home," which was a thrust at her husband.

But there was no stopping Amelia — she was far too capable to be outdone by gossip, whether of barroom or bedroom, and she soon had western Iowa and eastern Nebraska by the ears. The Nebraska territorial legislature heard her in the capitol building at Omaha; churches were open to her in both towns, and she journeyed over to Des Moines and stirred the citizens.

Four years after she and her husband located in Council Bluffs the town had a visitor whose name was Abraham Lincoln. W. H. M. Pusey, a great-uncle of President Nathan Pusey of Harvard, gave Lincoln a reception in a big brick house that stood where the library is now located. Amelia Bloomer, feminist, was among those present — according to early traditions. But tradition has nothing to say whether Amelia wore, or did not wear, her radical costume. If she did we should not forget that Abraham Lincoln was himself considered to be quite radical in those days, even wanting to break up a four billion dollar business in the traffic of slaves.

Editorial Enmities

THE editors of "The Bugle" and "The Chronotype" were in a fight to a finish—a pen and ink battle. Under the editorial "we" they fought for the favors of the 2,000 people of the Council Bluffs of 1855. They pulled no punches. Their words were barbed, picturesque, insulting, and the fight they started was still going on when the Civil War opened in 1861, though issues that had been personal had become national.

It is only by a close reading of the racy and ornate prose of the Bugle and the Chronotype of just one hundred years ago that we of modern Council Bluffs get an inkling of what this ink-sling meant. But when we do we stumble upon forces in play and issues that became paramount. For beneath the editorial bluff and billingsgate — journalistic style of a century ago — there simmered the hottest sort of sectional strife imaginable.

To the fore, of course, was the issue of "Slavery" in the United States. In pioneer Council Bluffs was a fairly strong pro-Slavery group. As a foil to these citizens, practically none of whom were actually slaveholders, was a group, chiefly of New England background, made up of out-and-out "Abolitionists." In between was a third element that preferred a compromise to a fight — business men for the most part who were more engrossed in buying and selling than in taking an extreme position on this burning question. So these merchants used one side of the Bugle and the Chronotype to advertise and the editors used the other side to abuse each other as well as to slip in an article or two that revealed something of their thinking on what should be done about the "institution of slavery."

The years 1855 to 1860 in Council Bluffs set the pattern of the town's future. One may discover this by scanning, not skimming through, the pioneer newspapers. Here we come upon diverse elements that, in the fires of controversy, are to be hammered into certain social and

economic solidarity in order to exist at all. There were rivalries even to an upper, middle and lower Broadway, but it was long and wide enough to make room for all.

Council Bluffs in its formative years before the Civil War was the center in western Iowa for nearly a dozen land agencies that kept real estate at high pitch. Consequently, the growth in the first seven years of its history as a chartered town was swift. Into it, and into Pottawattamie county, moved "land hungry" multitudes of peoples of diverse nationalities. Land prices went up. For example, the lot on which now stands the Savings Bank, which sold for \$40.00 in 1852, sold for \$200.00 in 1855 — a remarkable increase in the eyes of the pioneers. By 1856 this corner at Broadway and Pearl brought \$2,000, a fabulous sum to old settlers.

But the sharpest topic of discussion, in which there was more of unity than on most controversial subjects, was railroads which, building west from Chicago, had reached the Mississippi and a little beyond. The race of two competing companies to reach the Missouri found the town fairly well united behind the Rock Island — then the M & M — to make Council Bluffs ahead of a rival road that planned to strike the river 25 miles farther north.

The struggle brought a young surveyor into some prominence—G. M. Dodge who was working for Henry Farnam of the Rock Island. Dodge drove his surveying crew hard, fighting for Council Bluffs where he lived, and the rival company, the North Western, finally bent its own surveying crews south-west instead of continuing straight west to the Missouri, as it first seemed to want to do, and touch the river opposite old Ft. Calhoun. It is in this surveying struggle that we discover the forces and factors that would play a prime part in Lincoln fixing the focal point of the U.P. here.



A Bank Is Born

THE time is mid-February, 1856. It is 30 below zero. A nineteen year old boy is locking the front door of a little frame building on upper-Broadway. Over the lintel of the door is the sign: Baldwin & Dodge Co. — Bankers & Land Agents.

A sheet-iron safe stands behind a pine counter with a walnut top of native lumber. Near is a desk and a table. In the center of the room is a box-like, wood-burning stove. Its chimney is roaring — so is the storm up and down Broadway.

The bank is just a month old. Farther down Broadway, near Pearl street, is an older bank — nine months older. Over its door is the sign: Greene, Weare & Benton. The bank is a branch of a Cedar Rapids firm. The new bank on upper-Broadway is home-grown, both Baldwin and Dodge being citizens of Council Bluffs.

The young man who has just locked the door of the bank is the younger brother of the man who became the chief engineer in the building of the Union Pacific. The youth is Nathan Phillips Dodge,

clerk and book-keeper of the firm. He sleeps in a cubbyhole back of the office. He is also the janitor. He takes his meals at the "Robinson House" just across the street. He doesn't know it but he has begun a banking career of more than half a century. He doesn't know it but he is clerk of a little bank that is to become a big bank, one that he, for many years, will direct under the name: "Council Bluffs Savings Bank," the only one of the town's pioneer banking and land agencies that continues in an unbroken line to this day.

Five years after Nathan Dodge became book-keeper of the bank he is placed in full management. For his brother, Grenville M. Dodge, is about to lead the Fourth Iowa Infantry to war. Anyhow, he is more interested in a military and railroad career than banking.

So Nathan Dodge stays at home and fights the "Copperheads," an anti-Civil War and anti-Abraham Lincoln group that was strong in Iowa with an influential nucleus locally. Here is a lost page of Council Bluffs History!

Pioneer banks and bankers, including the total story of the transition from a bartering to a money economy, have many parallels in our national history. But none are more significant than that of the white social order on the upper-Missouri.

Local merchants, throughout the Kanessville days and on to 1855, were their own bankers. They had small safes, by no means burglar-proof, that held their "cash" until they could steamboat down to St. Louis and buy goods to be shipped up. Those early merchants prospered and banks soon became necessities, for increasing business meant complexities that can be handled only through local clearance points. Such is the history of most banking houses from times immemorial.

The actual origin of pioneer banking in western Iowa and eastern Nebraska was in the land agencies that dealt both in farms and town real estate. For there was little specie or "hard money" and the law said that a 160 acre farm had to be paid for in "gold," not in any other circulating medium. Soldiers who had served in any and all past wars of the U. S. had been issued "warrants" permitting them to buy land at \$1.25 an acre. Land agencies bought up many of these warrants for \$1.00 because many veterans either didn't want to farm or couldn't raise the cash. From land agencies and the real estate business to banks was not a too difficult step, so it was not surprising that five banks, or quasi-banks, were in operation here by 1856. Just one year later a money panic shook the East and swept to the Middle West. Most of the local firms went under. The one that survived was Baldwin & Dodge, genesis of the Council Bluffs Savings Bank.



When Lincoln Walked Broadway

A TALL MAN, taller than the sunflowers lining both sides of Broadway, rode in Harle's Omnibus from the river landing up to the Pacific House that stood where Beno's now faces down Pearl street. He got out of the vehicle, picked up his carpetbag the busman tossed to the plank walk and entered the hotel.

The man's height was not the most unusual thing about him, though his frame was angular and jackknifed almost grotesquely as he walked. It was the face that

held attention, beardless at that date, 1859, according to a photograph made a few months before. Even then the features were irregular. Two deep lines pyramided down from either side of his nose to both sides of a mouth of thick lips. The nose was large; the eyebrows bushy; the eyes, deep-set and even then revealing a certain weariness. The ears, with no sideburns to lessen their size, were big and stood out from his head. Atop the massive forehead was a shock of unruly hair. He would have been homely at

fifty, his exact age when he came here, except for the play of humor across his face, revealed in his eyes and at the corners of his mouth.

John J. Jones, proprietor of the Pacific House, glanced at the name the tall man wrote in registering—"A. Lincoln, Springfield, Ill." Maybe the name didn't mean a thing to Mr. Jones, though that name had been in print a good deal in papers east of the Mississippi just the year before. For this man had debated a U. S. Senator, Douglass, on great issues of the hour.

"Know a couple families here by the name of Pusey and Officer?" the tall man inquired. Proprietor Jones nodded. He pointed down Pearl street. "They live just two blocks from here — in big brick houses on the far side of a park — think you can see the Pusey house from here. The Officer's house stands just west of it. They run a bank here." It was the tall man's turn to nod. "Think I'll stroll down there and call before I go up to my room," he said. And he did.

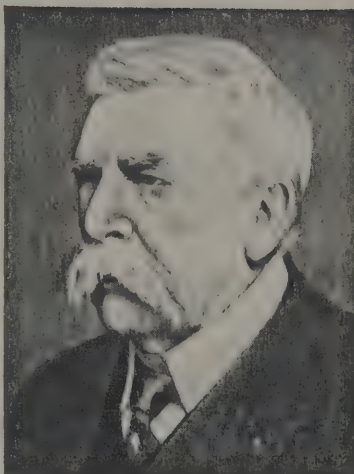
Thirty-seven years later, 1897, W. H. M. Pusey wrote an article on Lincoln's visit here that was published in Wm. J. Leverett's ably edited "The Trans-Mississippian," a slick paper magazine of excellent format he published at 224 North First Street. "Lincoln's visit to our city was purely accidental," Pusey wrote. By this he, in part, seems to have meant that neither the Puseys nor the Officers, who had known Lincoln back in Springfield, knew of his presence until he knocked at their doors, a hot, late afternoon of August 12, 1859.

But research in recent years, augmented by records found in the Court House of Pottawattamie county, plus

statements made by General G. M. Dodge, brings out the fact that Lincoln came here after a political speech down in Kansas to see a piece of land offered as collateral for a loan he made to Norman B. Judd. Judd, afterwards Lincoln's ambassador to Germany, an Illinois Central railroad attorney, had asked Lincoln for the loan of \$3,000.00. This was made after his visit here, and these town lots, seventeen of them, were in his possession at the time of his assassination six years later.

What was "accidental" in the visit Abraham Lincoln made to Council Bluffs was his meeting with a young surveyor for the M. and M. (the Rock Island) on the porch of the Pacific House. At that hour there was no Union Pacific railroad nor even a charter for one — only battles in Congress for the building of a transcontinental line along some parallel, either North or South. Nor at the hour Dodge met Lincoln did any one dream that the man who had debated Senator Douglass would, in two swift, hectic years, be president of the United States from which Southern states would withdraw.

All is history now and history of the highest import. What Council Bluffs should always remember, generation after generation, that the central figure in the drama of these states, when some withdrew from the Union, was the tall man who registered at the Pacific House; who walked Broadway; who spoke by candlelight at Concert Hall, where the Strand theater now stands; who stood on a high bluff at the top of Oakland Avenue and saw the future through eyes—and a brain—of clarity and power; and who, after three days, boarded a steamboat, lifted his stovepipe hat to the crowd on the dock and journeyed on to destiny and national immortality.



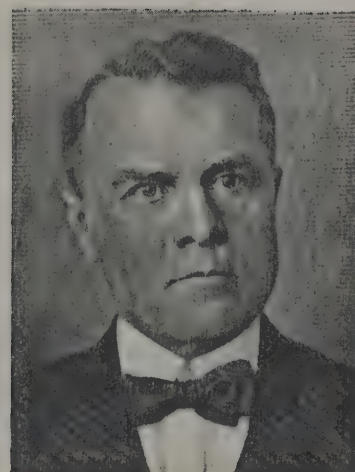
ners



NATHAN P. DODGE

President

November 1, 1870—November 3, 1902



THEODORE LASKOWSKI

President

November 6, 1916—March 22, 1923

JOHN G. WOODWARD

President

May 9, 1923—March 21, 1936

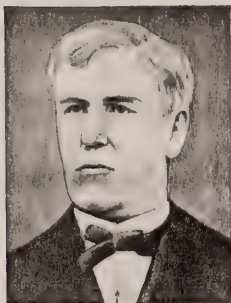


L. W. ROSS

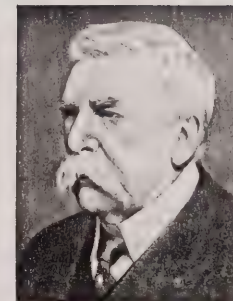
President

January 8, 1952





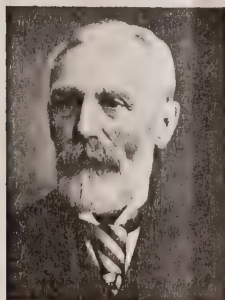
100 Years of Strong Leadership in the Council Bluffs Savings Bank



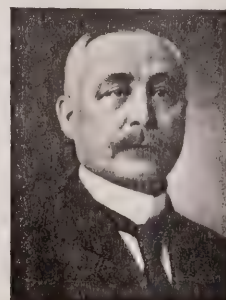
JOHN T. BALDWIN (top left) and GRENVILLE M. DODGE (top right) Original Partners
in BALDWIN and DODGE, a Private Bank from 1856 to 1870.



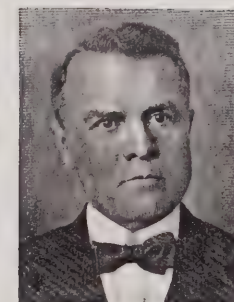
NATHAN P. DODGE
President
November 1, 1870—November 3, 1902



JOHN BERESHEIM
President
November 3, 1902—November 5, 1909



AUGUST BERESHEIM
President
November 24, 1909—November, 1916



THEODORE LASKOWSKI
President
November 6, 1916—March 22, 1923

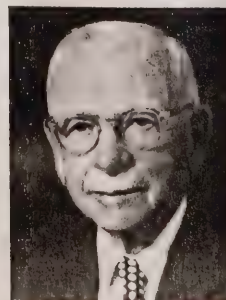
JOHN G. WOODWARD
President
May 9, 1923—March 21, 1936



B. A. GRONSTAL
President
April 13, 1936—November 10, 1949



E. H. LOUGEE
President
November 10, 1949—January 8, 1952



L. W. ROSS
President
January 8, 1952





Military Maneuvers On the Missouri

THE telegraph instrument in the cubby-hole office on Broadway near Scott began a staccato dance — clickety-clack! The youthful operator dropped a new book he had been reading — “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” — and reached for the key lever, listened intently. Suddenly, jumping from his chair, he ran to the street and shouted to the loungers on the porch of the Pacific House — “Fort Sumter has been fired on!” It was April 12th, 1861!

Clickety-clack! The operator wrote out another message on June 26th “G. M.

Dodge of Council Bluffs appointed Colonel of the Fourth Iowa Infantry.” Who was he? The town knew; so did a few others in the eastern part of the state; for he had lived in the town since 1854. Moreover, he had made a survey for the Rock Island railroad, river to river in 1853-54. He was young — just thirty the day Ft. Sumter had been fired on.

But why had Simon Cameron, Lincoln’s Secretary of War, made the young railroad surveyor a colonel? Answers to this question have been numerous. Here

are a few: That Dodge had met Lincoln on the porch of the Pacific House; that Dodge was at the Chicago convention where Lincoln was nominated and influenced the Iowa delegation and made a bold bid through national railroad groups and Iowa politicians for a brigadier generalship, but had to settle for a colonelcy.

How strange it is that a relatively unknown, penniless and youthful railroad surveyor, in the hire of a beginning line that could hardly pay salaries, was able to "lobby" at Washington in the start of Lincoln's administration and through sheer shenanigan get an appointment that he didn't deserve. So his critics then, and even now, wanted to know.

The truth of the matter is that Dodge was the best qualified military man in western Iowa, when the war broke out, to lead the first regiment to be organized in the Missouri river country. Educated at a military school — Norwich University in Vermont — he laid the foundation of our town's marked military history by organizing the Council Bluffs Guards in 1856. Dodge offered this company to Iowa's governor, Kirkwood, to be merged with the First Iowa Infantry, then forming. The governor had other plans; so did Dodge, and what he did was to go straight to Secretary of War, Cameron.

The rest is history and that sort of history can not be nullified by those critics who have been, and are, more intent on General Dodge's frailties and foibles than on the magnificent contribution he made in defense of the Union and in the expansion of the nation's great systems of transportation.

The composition of the Fourth Iowa Infantry that Dodge led to war has certain significance. There were only 15 Iowa-born men in it. The breakdown shows this: Ohioans, 256; Pennsylvanians, 202; Indiana, 243; Illinois, 54; New York, 65; Virginia, 45; Kentucky, 35; Missouri, 33; of foreign-born there were but 20. The three slave-holding states gave 123 men to this "Northern" regiment.

But what is more significant, this town for all its "Secesh" sentiment, some of which was bitter and persistent, gave a regiment that participated in some of the hardest fought battles of the Civil War. Dodge led them in one engagement — Pea Ridge. After that, he caught the attention of Grant and Sherman and became their foremost military-railroad builder in Mississippi. And Grenville Mellen Dodge was on his way to wide fame.



When We Had a Union Depot

IT was a long time ago! Originally, our Union Pacific Depot was a massive brick building, two full stories with a broad cupola, with waiting rooms, ticket offices, lunch counter, news stands, barber shop and bar on the first floor; on the second floor an "elegantly furnished" hotel with sleeping rooms finished in hard pine and black walnut beds. Today, it is a one story structure, a little drab but highly useful as a mail transfer point, yet sort of an architectural "Ichabod" whose glory is departed.

Eight trunk lines nosed into this station, for here the travelers to the wider west changed cars. If they remained overnight, and many did, the combined station and hotel gave the "feel" of the metropolitan depots of Chicago and New York. Dining in the swank restaurant was a social as well as a gastronomical event and once, among the celebrities who were guests, was Robert Louis Stevenson, Scotch immortal man of letters.

I was, at the turn of the century, an overnight guest at this railroad hotel and

well remember its beautiful interior and excellent cuisine. Incidentally, there I took a street car and came up as far as Bayliss Park; noted the stately homes fronting on it; sat on a bench and gazed at the bronze fountain in spray, never remotely imagining that, one day, I would write of the town's historic past.

But what I remember clearest of all after 55 years was the thrilling action at the Union Pacific Transfer. Into it and out of it shuttled the Northwestern, the Burlington, the Rock Island, the Wabash, the Milwaukee and allied lines; and starting from it, for its eastern terminus was here, was the Union Pacific itself, so interwoven in the story of transcontinental transportation.

Today, the scene is so changed that one is led to ask what factors and forces were in play through the years that brought it to pass.

Such a query is not easy of analysis. Included in it are factors both intrinsic and extrinsic. Of the intrinsic natural forces, the wide-washing Missouri was a deciding factor. Even after the first railroad bridge was built it became increasingly clear that the Union Pacific would find the west side of the river the more logical place for its major shops and headquarters. And it was inevitable that the nascent stock yards, originating on the east side of the river in a small pork-packing business, would follow the Union

Pacific's establishment of offices in Omaha.

But of the extrinsic factors that altered the early picture the one of the rivalries incidental to new towns in frontier communities is perhaps the basic factor. Not even General Dodge who, as chief engineer in the construction of the Union Pacific, could prevent the centralization of the road's interest on the west side of the river, though he had purchased, for the company, over 1000 acres on the east side for its shops and, ostensibly, its headquarters. In the squabble and the showdown that followed the Iowa town won the distinction of having Union Pacific's eastern terminus and the Nebraska town got the headquarters.

The scene the artist depicts is, however, factual, for we had a great union depot as early as the middle 1870's and on for half a century. Nor are we romancing too much when Nathan Dodge, with valise in hand, waves to his wife, Susan Lockwood Dodge, as he is about to "take the cars" for New York and Boston in the interest of the Council Bluffs Savings Bank, of which he is president, for "Eastern money" was vital in all our early banking. The scene has changed, yet how interesting it becomes once more as we see the Union Pacific's expansion of its "yards" down on the very flood-plains of the Missouri where, so long ago, the present vast network of tracks first took form in little trails of rust.

From Indians to Industry

THIS caption appears on the letterhead of the Council Bluffs Industrial Foundation. In the four words, with a little imagination on the part of the reader, is a summation of a century of the white man's social order on the upper-Missouri.

One hundred years ago, relatively, is just yesterday. For instance, I know half dozen men and women whose lives come very near being parallel with the total development of western Iowa society, for each is close to ninety. So literally, from the Indians to modern industry is but a century.

The bulk of the aboriginal peoples of this area did not vanish until just before the Civil War, for it required a full decade after the final treaty with the government to move them southwest. When they left there were practically no memorials that remained of their untold centuries of existence — no architecture, no industries and no appreciable agricultural advances, though beneath their feet was one of the world's richest soils. Even the wealth in furs was only faintly sensed by them despite the fact the white man's fur companies had operated up and down the Missouri from the time of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Fifty years after Kanesville became Council Bluffs a man by the name of John C. Small wrote a brochure of the town's growth and achievements in the period between 1853 and 1898. But there was nothing small in Mr. Small's estimate of the town's importance "in the galaxy of western cities," as he saw fit to write. His "boosterism" may have lead him to some extravagant conclusions, but when he wrote, "Council Bluffs stands second in the United States, and in the world, as a wholesale implement center," he was not romancing. For facts and figures reveal a ten million dollar annual business in agricultural implements, and accessories, in the 1890's.

What happened to change this picture so drastically since the turn of the cen-

tury? It is right at this point that I wish I were some social and economic analyst who could, with a degree of accuracy, write lucidly on this problem. I doubt that anyone can do so to the satisfaction of the more competent financial thinkers. What I am going to say here and now is a purely personal appraisal of the social and economic forces that were in play that led to our industrial recession in the specific realm of agricultural implements.

Council Bluffs was a "natural" for the establishment of "jobbing houses" in the 1870's and 80's. Not only was this true for the sale of agricultural implements but for the distribution of buggies, surreys, phaetons and road wagons. Eight trunk lines of railway made the town a distribution center, and it was one from 1880 to about 1900 and beyond. Its even dozen of big warehouses lifted from the very yards of these eight trunk lines and a local implement house would tap a territory, not only of Iowa but all of Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas and northern Missouri. The Pioneer Implement Company, hard-by one of the big McCormick houses itself, led the way. But the Union Transfer Company, in the late 1890's housed thirty different manufacturers' lines and drew abreast of the others.

Near the beginning of the 20th century our town stood, apparently, on the threshold of a swift expansion in every way, but unforeseen forces slowed it down. As I have intimated, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to give a convincing analysis of all the factors involved. It is here that one is tempted to take refuge in Shakespeare's lines, "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at flood, leads on to fortune; omitted, all the journey of their lives is bound in shallows." Did the town, in some crucial time of high tide, fail in leadership and vision, or did circumstances beyond the control of the strongest of men lead it into certain "shallows" from which its emergence has been too pedestrian?



Transportation Triumphs and Trouble

TRANSPORTATION honors came early to our town, not alone because of the eight trunk lines converging here by 1870, but also because we laid the basis of our street car system the year before. Its lone track was down Broadway from First street to the river. Its patrons could board it at the steamboat landing, the Omaha ferry, and the platforms of the U. P. transfer on Union avenue near Spoon Lake, long since dried up.

The coming of the "horse-car" was the beginning of the town's long series of

transportation troubles. The street railway became the bitter rival of the Harl bus line. The bus driver favored the old Pacific House; the horse-car driver favored the new Ogden House; it was the old upper and lower Broadway squabble all over again. The horse-car and the Ogden House won out, for this hotel, our first "swank" one, had three ball rooms where the elite, both of Council Bluffs and Omaha, could hop around.

Twenty years later, specifically in 1888, Broadway felt the thrill of electri-

city so far as street cars were concerned, though the Edison company came here four years earlier. Probably our town was the second in the United States to operate successfully an electric street-railway. Richmond seems to have been the first, though not until after abortive efforts at Cleveland and Kansas City. Be this as it may, our town was one of the first to make the electric street car a going concern, for the company prospered, especially after the toll bridge became the final link in transportation between Council Bluffs and Omaha.

But we were getting "snootier," for not only had the Pacific House vanished but its long-time rival, the Ogden House — so our elite thought — was becoming "passe," so the Grand Hotel was built where the Chieftain now stands. The Grand was, as the Ogden had been, soon advertised as "the finest hotel west of Chicago." Local society, including Omaha, hopped around more than ever, for the "Grand" was indeed built on a grand scale and when it burned in 1925 it was the end of a certain social era for Council Bluffs.

Artist John Andrews' "scratch" drawing tells a certain story: the passing of the "horse-car" turning off Broadway into Pearl Street, and the arrival of the electric street car, Omaha bound. Between, one sees the original Baldwin Block, completed in 1891 and purchased by the Council Bluffs Savings Bank in 1896. The town by this time had a population of 20,000 and, let it be noted, was slipping a little. A study of its ups and downs through the 1890's may prove revealing, for population increases and declines are based on social and economic factors of great sig-

nificance. In fact, a community's social and economic patterns may reveal its philosophy as well as its manners and customs. The spirit and the atmosphere of a city are emotional forces of tremendous import.

First of all, the greatest numerical growth of our town was between 1870 and 1880. The increase was from 10,000 to 18,000. It was within this decade that industrial emphasis was at high pitch. Let's note the factors and forces.

The railroads, eight trunk lines, had completed their focalization here. The U. P. bridge was up. Immigration was the heaviest in the history of the nation: men of all lands were in motion, East to West. Halting here were Danes, Swedes, Norwegians and Germans — these predominated. But there were the vigorous Irish, Scotch-Irish, Welch, and Jews. Overnight, so to speak, the town became cosmopolitan. Old, outworn issues faded, especially those of the "late Rebellion," and men looked to the future, and when men look to the future they go forward.

This high tide of industrial and social development seemed a sure foundation for future development. Then something happened: our population dropped from 21,557 in 1885 to 21,474 by 1890. It was not much of a drop but it presaged something. What? The answer is difficult. By 1895 the population was down to 20,000. A spirit of what the French call "laissezfaire" (do nothing) and an odd devotion to the "status quo" (let things alone) may have gripped the community. Such a spirit will chill a town and cause grass to grow in its streets and, paradoxically, to wither in its parks.

At the Turn of the Century

WHEN the 20th century dawned, our town, not including the five years of old Kanesville's history, had completed its first half century. Its fifty years of history, dissimilar to the socio-religious experiment of the Mormons of Kanesville, yet stemming from it, revealed drastic changes. Our population at the turn of the century was 26,000, a sharp upturn from 1895. The Trans-Mississippi Exposition held at Omaha in 1898 and participated in by Council Bluffs had given some impetus to both towns and they needed it, for each had experienced a population loss, and Omaha one of severe magnitude.

But it is only when we turn from the bare bones of history of census figures, industrial statistics, and commercial charts, to a consideration of a community's total expression do we arrive at an approximation of its strength and weakness. In this short space I can do little more than outline our manners and morals at the turn of the century; the readers may fill out the picture to suit themselves.

The completion of Council Bluffs' first fifty years really marked the end of an era not only for our town but for all the upper Missouri River country. The Trans-Mississippi Exposition had been an attempt to memorialize this social order in which our community had not only been pivotal but whose pioneering was of prime significance in the total scheme of the region's development. We shared in a limited way in the Exposition that drew an attendance of 2,600,000 people through our so-called Union Station with little or no understanding of the town's

leading pioneer role in the drama of this region's social order.

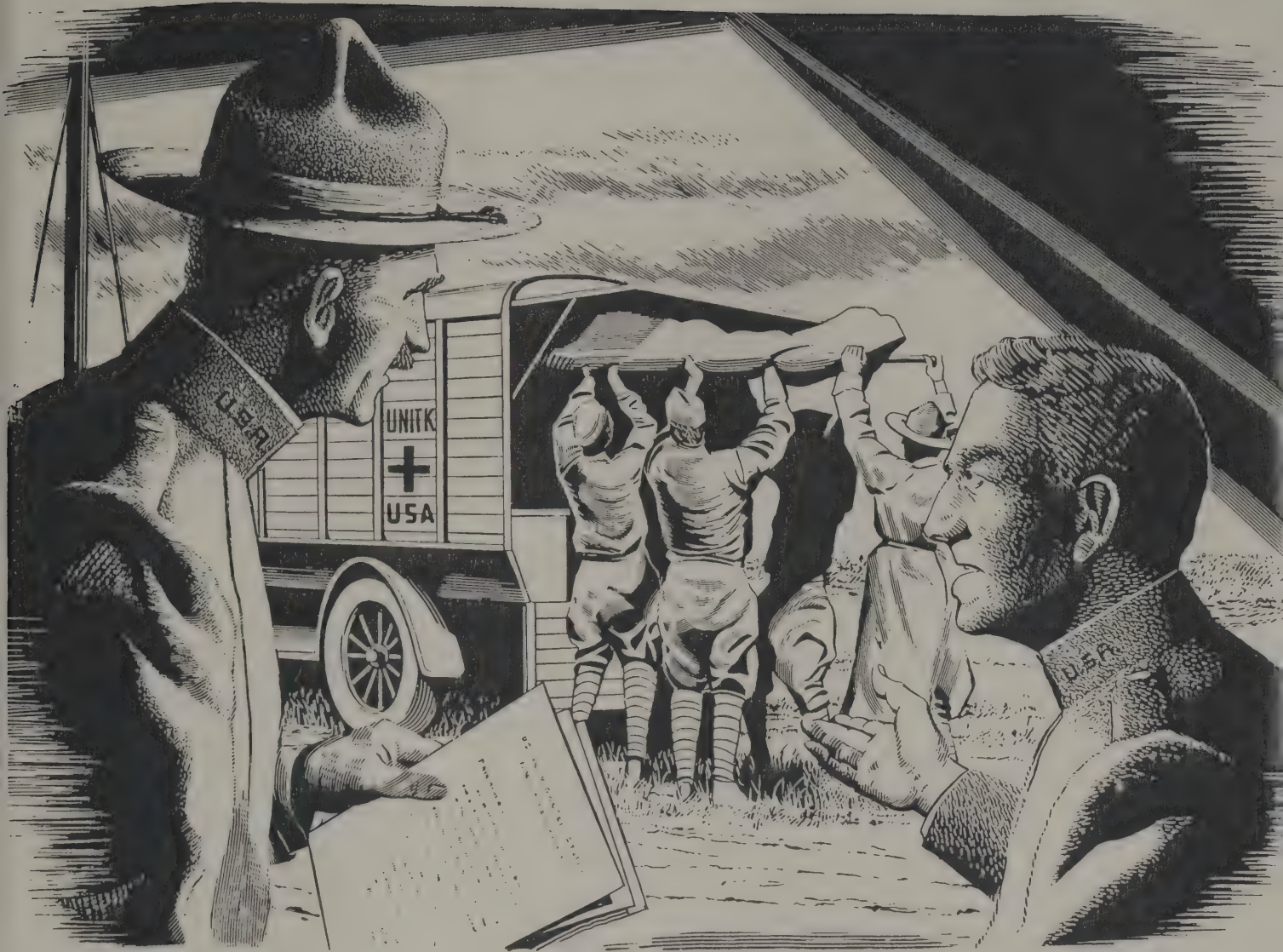
In half a century we had gone from the covered wagon to the automobile; from the twelve miles an hour steamboat to the fifty miles an hour overland railway car; from the mule-drawn freighter across the plains to the mile-long freight trains of eight trunk lines that focalized here. But in another sense, none the less significant, we had changed from a vigorous, daring pioneer society to one of increasing conservatism destined to leave its mark upon the spirit of the town and to give it a certain atmosphere of caution.

Yet, by one of the strangest of paradoxes, the town's leaders at the turn of the century were men of strong personality and individually successful in their own business and professional vocations. There were a score of them who could have measured with the foremost figures in much larger communities, but their strength lay in their "rugged individualism" and not in their civic cooperation. They did not know the fine art of working with other men and often stood apart from efforts in the city to enhance its cultural life, to beautify it and make it more inviting to outside interests. Consequently, the town was slow to grasp the opportunities that would have, with all its railroad facilities and natural situation, greatly accelerated its growth.

Basically, it was a case of leaders not leading. They not only failed to lead but

may unwittingly have been stumbling-blocks to progress. Still, the century was only three or four year old when half a dozen men, analyzing the drift of things, founded the Commercial Club, which, among many other aims, pledged themselves to "work for the common good of all as touching the general welfare of the city." But this organization had come belatedly, a full generation after "a number of our influential citizens formed an association" designed to attempt to capture large industries seeking more advantageous locations and to conserve the industries already thriving by 1870. But the first one seems to have died a-borning, for there was no united civic effort that halted the decline of certain industries after the 1880's.

One is led to wonder if, at the turn of the century, we had more veneer and less ruggedness; more artificiality and less "elegance" of a basic sort; more bookishness and less learning. The last of the log buildings along Broadway had given place to more ornate fronts; our architecture had become "rococo," our household furnishing were overstuffed, with the fine furniture of our early Southerners and New Englanders stored in the attic. We were living too much off the past and too engrossed in the hour to think in terms of the future. So we lost in population by 1905 and there was some danger of our becoming "shabbily genteel." But we didn't, for world-shaking events were at hand and in them we would participate with distinction, especially our soldiers.



Healing the Wounds of War

TAKE a good look at this picture. If you are one of the past generation and long a resident of the town you may recognize the tall officer who wears the corded army hat. If you are of this generation you should be interested to know who he is and what he did.

He is Colonel Don Macrae who organized and commanded Unit K that formed the nucleus of Mobile Hospital No. 1, World War 1, of the American Expeditionary Forces in France and the only

medical unit of our forces to receive the Croix de Guerre in the European conflict. Here is but a fragment of the story.

It was immediately after Dr. Macrae's return from service on the Mexican border in 1917 that he resigned from the Iowa National Guard in order to form Hospital Unit K. Its personnel, chiefly of our town's own doctors, nurses and enlisted men was but one of the four medical units that headed for Europe at the start of 1918. Unit K sailed on the ill-fated "Car-

pathia," that was torpedoed on her return voyage.

Scarcely had the French military authorities laid eyes on Unit K than plans were made to absorb it into Base Hospital No. 27, A.E.F. This led to a battle, not with the Germans but between Major Macrae and certain of the brass of our own forces. Interestingly enough, a French commander whose knowledge of military medical units was superior either to that of the British or Americans, sustained Macrae and Unit K remained intact, though not for long.

The truth was that French high military powers were quick to sense the strength of the unit's personnel and suggested that its stubborn and capable commander be placed at the head of the French "Auto-Chir," or Mobile Hospital No. 1 in Paris. This came to pass just two months after Macrae and his outfit reached France. No one dreamed at the time that the merging of Unit K into Mobile Hospital No. 1 would make medical military history of an enduring sort, but that is precisely what happened.

Major Macrae's immediate problem was to transfer all the equipment of the French Auto-Chir to the American repair shops five miles away. It was only a little matter of 33 trucks of equipment and at that hour he had only eight men to do the moving. They called themselves "Pieces of Eight" and they set a record of speed and efficiency. I had read the story from

a typed manuscript history of Mobile Hospital No. 1 that Macrae gave me in 1926, but it was only a couple of years ago that "Hap" Hetrick of Council Bluffs and Des Moines, a corporal in old Unit K, afterwards a sergeant, detailed the story to me. The action of the "Pieces of Eight" in so many ways symbolizes the drive of all our forces.

Today on my desk is Dr. Macrae's own typewritten manuscript, or a copy, of the official record of Mobile Hospital No. 1. One has to read between the lines of this manuscript to catch its overtones for in it is a deathless music of courage, sacrifice, patriotism and love. It is something of a saga of twelve doctors, twenty-one women nurses and fifty enlisted men — not a one drafted — who enlisted into a sacred compact and kept it just behind the trenches of half a dozen of the greatest battlefields of that terrible conflict.

Somewhere in Colonel Macrae's manuscript are two or three significant lines that tell of the calm courage of the nurses of his outfit when under fire. Here were a group of American women who may never have heard even a volley fired on the 4th of July who stayed at their posts in fields where bombs sometimes dropped — one within 45 yards — and ministered to the mangled and the dying as only women can minister.

Here is one of the brightest pages in the total military history of the old town.

Military Men On the Missouri

SOLDIERS crowd the pages of local history. There are three generals of top rank; colonels, captains and lieutenants; and a multitude of "high privates in the rear ranks." To name all of them would be impossible; to fail to write of some would be remiss in the narrative of the town's military history.

The first white settlement of any consequence on the upper Missouri gave a battalion to serve in the war with Mexico. The history of the Mormon Battalion constitutes a saga within itself. No sooner had the Mormons reached the Missouri after their trek across Iowa, a full year before they built Kaneshville, than they raised a battalion of 400 men to serve against Mexico. The time was June, 1846.

Colonel James Allen of the U. S. Army, stationed at Fort Leavenworth, was the leading figure in recruiting the Mormon Battalion. True, the government bargained with officials of the Mormon church in order to raise this force, agreeing to permit their families to locate on the treaty lands of the Pottawattamies and the Omahas, and paying over \$25,000 to the families of the soldiers. This odd and little understood transaction does not invalidate the high services the Mormon Battalion rendered in helping to hold California against Mexico.

Ten years later, and after Kaneshville had become Council Bluffs, Grenville Mellen Dodge — the town's first major general — organized the Council Bluffs Guards. Although he was a graduate of a military school, Norwich, Vermont, he was a private citizen, without military rank and title, and quite young. He was made captain of the local company which became the genesis of the town's remarkable military background. A recent Iowa writer has intimated that General Dodge, during the Civil War, pulled a lot of political strings to get himself a major-generalship. The Iowa writer, a college don,

either overlooked or ignored the fact that Dodge became a brigadier general for distinguished services rendered at the battle of Pea Ridge and a major general after he led the sixteenth corps of Sherman's army at the battle of Atlanta.

Our second high-ranking officer was — and is — variously designated as "Doctor Matt," "General Tinley," and "Dr. Matthew A. Tinley." He was our first soldier to attain the rank of lieutenant general. His total military career, of which only a hint can be given here, has nothing of the chauvinist, or the jingo, in it. From the day he shipped with the now celebrated Company L, to the Philippines to serve against Spain, on to his retirement as a lieutenant general, his military career was always in keeping with patriotism in its basic significance.

Today, one of our younger soldiers to attain the high rank of lieutenant general is Frank F. Everest, Jr., Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations, U. S. Air Force. Like his distinguished predecessors, Dodge and Tinley, Everest's record is free from self seeking at the expense of patriotism. The emphasis on their services for their country, wholly apart from the empty accusations of the town's chauvinism and military atmosphere, is made here because these three officers are symbols of the spirit of patriotic fervor that has always been ours.

Thus, it is not an invidious distinction to signal them out; rather is it to picture, in their specific portraits, the totality of, the town's bequest to the nation in times of crises. How extraordinary that bequest has been may be known, among other things, by the fact that up to World War II there was but one draftee in war time history of the town. So, if the spirit and the atmosphere of the town, as sensed by the outsider, seem to be strongly military, let it be remembered that, with a single exception up to World War II, we filled all military quotas with volunteers.

The Saga of the Sandbags

THURSDAY, April 17, 1952. From the tracks of the Northwestern to Dodge Park, Broadway looks like a picture taken of an excavated street in old Pompeii — the buildings are there but the street is empty of human beings.

The crest of the river is 30 feet. The sullen flood, slate-colored and wrinkled like a vast sheet of corrugated metal, bites savagely at the levee that curls past the town. Atop the levee 5,000 sandbags, in rows that resemble hogs crowded together in a long narrow lane, weight the wall of earth. Will the levee hold?

Fifty thousand people watch and wait from the higher grounds eastward a couple of miles. Ten thousand of them are from vacated homes down on the flood-plain of the "Mighty Mo." Was the river stronger than the men who had fought it? It always had been. Seventy years before this tense hour this same "old man river" had raged up Broadway as far as the tracks and with two feet less water than was now sweeping past.

Thousands of men — 5,000 of them from other towns — had made their fight — exactly 99 different communities had sent their men, stirred by the persistent calls for help sent out by KSWI and every broadcasting and telephone instrument that could be brought into play. Night and day they had fought the rising flood and with them fought scores of women from every walk of life — like Red Cross units just behind the line of battle. Now, April 17th, 1952, they could do little more than watch and wait.

Midnight! The levee holds, but new "boils," as well as aggravated old ones, appear inside the levee at the foot of Broadway. The treacherous stream had burrowed beneath the sandbags piled along the levee and, like an unseen foe

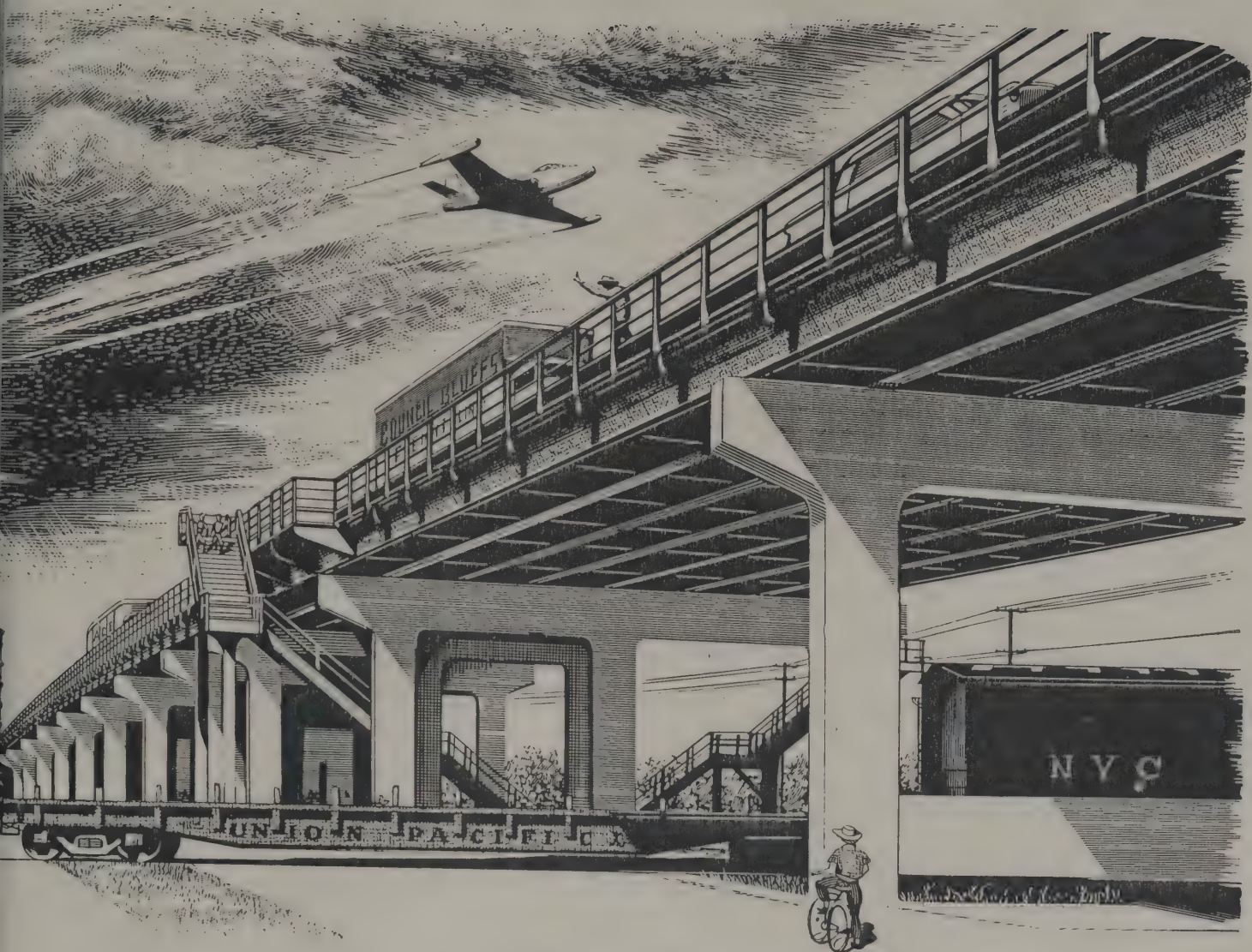
that tunnels under the walls of a besieged city, was about to make an assault in the dark. Skilled engineers, alert to such a contingency, which quickly could become a crisis and a disaster, never take their eyes off this particular spot. They ring the "boils" with sandbags, hurled to position by soldiers and civilians held for such emergencies and the pressure is off.

The pressure is off, but the emotional tenseness does not quite end; for it will not be until mid-day that the crest of the flood is passed. Noon comes and with it the river drops two inches. It is this infinitesimal margin that sends a thrill of hope through the hearts of thousands. But when the day is done and the darkness comes fear goes and the town rests and rejoices.

Only one force saved the city — that of unity that became a religion; for religion is rooted in sacrifice and sacrificial service was the keynote of the song that rose to a symphony.

The writer once said that the flooding of the Missouri and the fight against it washed out the old concept of "the other side of the tracks." But we are prone to forget. The passing of time does but dim experiences that should be life's greatest teachers. Lest we forget, may it not be that some memorial shall be set up between the lowlands and the highlands on which the town is built, forever to remind us that the city was saved because the people were of one mind.

By a memorial is not meant a mere inscription on a shaft of stone; rather should such a symbol be a force that binds the city's people even into a greater unity because of a common purpose. Why not make that memorial, placed somewhere midway the river and the hills, a noble structure of a central public school?



The Viaduct—Vision and Reality

"LOOK OUT for the cars!" In big black letters these words first appeared on a railroad crossing signboard in 1867 on Broadway between 11th and 12th. This warning sign, shaped like a huge letter X, really marked the beginning of a controversy that raged in the town for 88 years. The story, in the light of the completion of the viaduct, has highlights of more than ordinary interest.

The first ordinance to be written that designated the duration of time the railroads could block traffic at Broadway and 12th and at Main and 16th Avenue

was passed in 1883. In view of the fact that the Northwestern began to block Broadway traffic as early as 1867 — the year its lines were extended to the town — is indicative of the pedestrian way in which the community moved to regulate the time a train could straddle the town's chief artery.

Now this was back in the horse and buggy days and we may not have been in such a dither to get going until the first autos, augmented by their raucous horns, began to set a new tempo for the times. But the trains became longer and the five

minute clearance ordinance was far too short. So there was more wrangling and a revised ordinance was passed that gave the railroads ten minutes to clear. All in all, we were heading for a time when the traffic would become too great and tangled for any ordinance to regulate.

But the situation was not too acute until the swift multiplication of motor vehicles as well as the mile length of some of the freight trains made greater congestion. So it must have been, say about 1910, that there began the first serious agitation for an overpass.

Stormy years followed; litigation increased; and there might have been strained relations between the railroads and the town except for the fact that the interests of each were too large for mere bickering. Also, the vision of a possible union railroad station, perhaps wholly apart from the original Union Pacific Transfer Terminal, became an objective for the Chamber of Commerce.

Out of the tangle of public, private and corporate interests there emerged factors and forces that brought better analysis of the traffic problem and greater effort to solve it. The story need not be told here, even if there were space to tell it, but this much may be said: Except for the unity that finally came to the town and the devotion of certain leaders to the task of bridging the tracks that bisected Broadway, a viaduct would still be in the remote future. It is not too much to say that germane to the solution of all the problems involved, from beginning to end, inhered in the cooperation of the state and its

highway commissions and of the railroads themselves. So, today, an early dream that was sometimes nightmarish, has ended in the realization of something that far surpasses what was first in our collective thinking.

There is a deeper significance in the completion of the viaduct than that which appears in steel and stone. What is that significance? Well, first of all, the viaduct marks an end and a beginning. It is the end of certain confusion and the beginning of clearer perspective. Indeed it is not too much to say that the finished product we call the viaduct gives the town new incentives. If the cooperative efforts of all of our people when threatened by "Old Man River" did nothing more than lay the ghost of what, for all cities, is called "the other side of the tracks," it would have been sufficient. But the viaduct that lifts above the tracks is now a symbol of the end of a social and civic separation that was, in the past, too much of a chasm between peoples equally fine in purpose and potential.

Still, the completion of this viaduct presents a new civic challenge of a most immediate and practical sort. It is this: To prevent the area marked by the overpass from becoming a sort of dumping ground; a loafing spot, or even a place where lawlessness has greater freedom. So no matter what else may be done in that area we would be shortsighted and civically blind not to beautify it with shrubbery and grass and flowers and to guard against it becoming a plague spot with a slum in the making.

A Town Mid-Way a Continent

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NINETY years ago an editor of the Nonpareil, W. S. Burke, wrote a pamphlet entitled: "An Outline History of Council Bluffs". With pardonable pride this pioneer editor pointed out the greatness, and the greatness of opportunity, of his town of seven thousand citizens, although it was like any other town in Iowa, either smaller or larger. Yet, there were certain marked exceptions. Editor Burke sensed these exceptions and his brochure told of the town's strategic location. It lay directly in the path of the westward movement of the nation, predominately along the 42d parallel. Both nature and circumstance united to make it the bottleneck of pioneer railroads. Moreover, at the time Burke wrote, a south-to-north steamboat business of astonishing magnitude augmented the new overland system of transportation. So it was not exaggeration when Burke publicized Council Bluffs as the "crossing point of the great commercial highway from Ocean to Ocean".

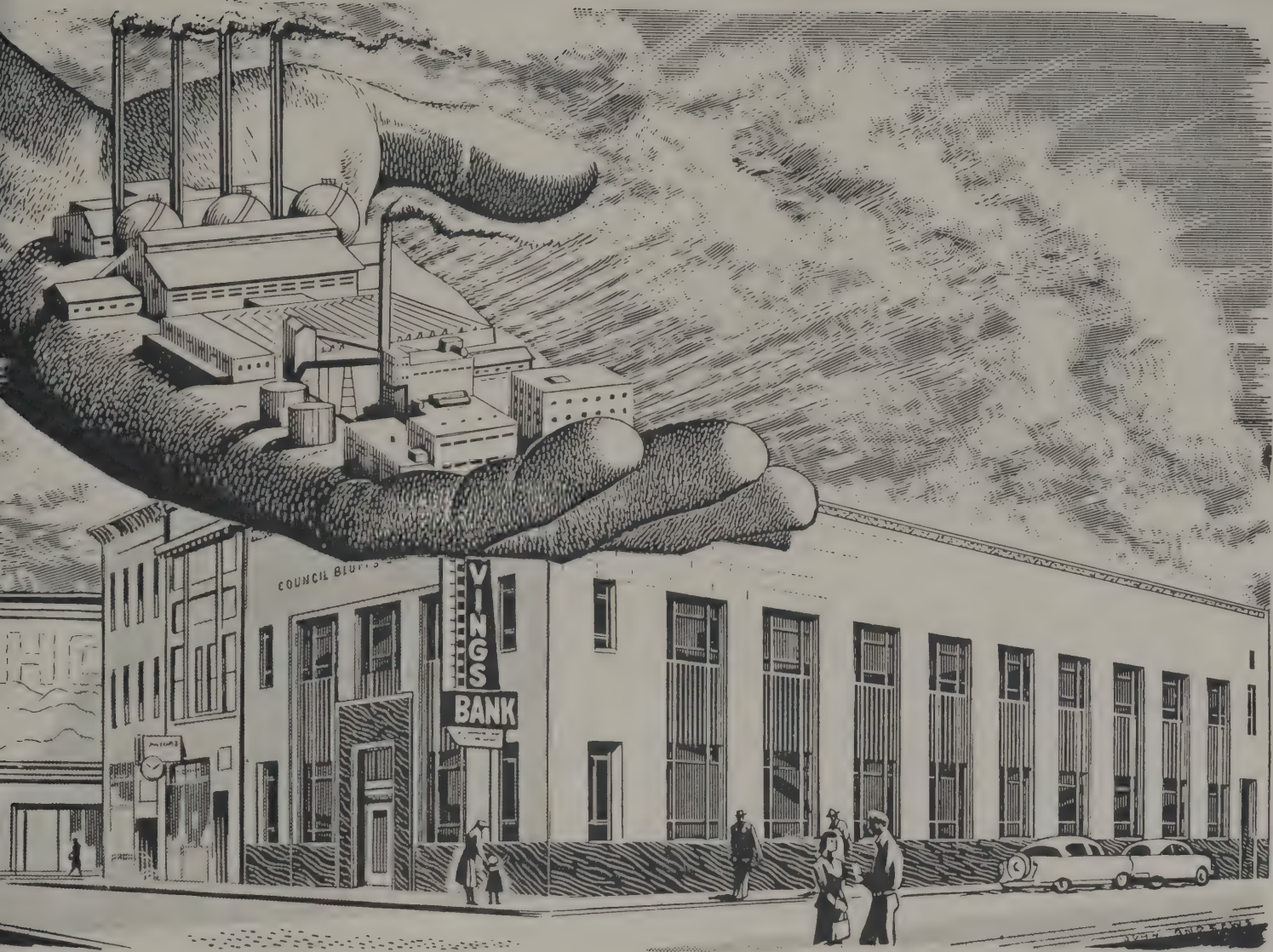
If Mr. Burke wrote too much in praise of mere bigness, it should be remembered that progress was always defined in terms of numbers and weights. He wanted his town to be the biggest one on the upper Missouri and when his critics, marshalling facts and figures, pointed out that the biggest cities had been built upon the west banks of great rivers, not the east banks, he conceded the point. But he also added that his town's strategic position would reverse this rule, for the simple reason that the producing country was east of the Missouri and the market west. Such, in fact, was the case when he wrote. Still, he lived long enough to see that the growth of the town was slower than four others on the same river, all pioneer border towns like our own.

Perhaps it is impossible to analyze all the factors in the growth of one city above the other, not only in the same area even within a few miles of each other. A river

between two towns, one on the east bank and one on the west, is no decisive factor in great growth or small. Then what?

First of all, no one who thinks clearly will conclude that mere bigness is also synonymous with greatness. The size of a city, primarily, has nothing to do with the character and culture of its people. The prime thing that should concern a city is whether its face is towards the future or turned from it. The chief criterion is this: Does it worship a nerveless, spineless status quo or is it alive to life? Contentment may be a very deadly state of mind, either in an individual or a community. In his once popular novel, "Main Street", Sinclair Lewis wrote: "Village contentment is the contentment of the quiet dead, who are scornful of the living for their restless walking. It is negation canonized as the positive virtue". When a town enslaves itself to reaction and worships only negative virtues it is doomed despite its location, the richness of the soil surrounding it, and the forces in play everywhere that could have proved the instruments of its achievements.

One of the strangest paradoxes in the communities of men has been the growth in greatness of the cities they built and even of the states they founded where the soil was thin and climatic conditions harsh. The other side of the shield is just as strange, for in a temperate climate, plus good soil and where wide opportunities obtain men have sometimes failed to build the durable state. Has it been that the challenge of a poor environment brings out greater virtues in us than do those situations in life that make for rather easy living with no particular effort? Be all this as it may, people inheriting a rich soil, a moderate climate, and a foundation that had in it racial elements of ruggedness and courage should keep before it a bright vision of better things. The answer is not alone in more people and more building but also in how they build and how they live with one another



What the Hand Holds

IN one of those incomparable passages of Scripture, which is as practical as it is poetic, are these lines: "Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams." Does this not, in its totality, present two immutable laws of life—the task of youth and the realized desire of the aged. It is but another way of saying, "old men for counsel and young men for war," though in it there is not the slightest of military connotations. Rather is it the significance of the pursuit and achievement of peace.

In this final illustration, Artist Andrews has, with economy of stroke, etched an idea that catches up into one picture the whole meaning; for what the hand holds is the past, the present and the future.

Basic in modern political economy is the institution we call a bank. Perhaps there have been moneyless societies — some social historians have said there were; but coincident with the rise of the modern world has been the bank. A

literary man of the past generation once wrote, "The bank is, next to a great spiritual experience, the nearest approach to what men have thought of being the Kingdom of Heaven." By this the writer, whoever he was, must have meant that economic instability makes for an almost universal pessimism. On the other hand, sound political economy, in which the bank in our modern world plays the prime role, makes fluid all human relations.

In Marxian economic philosophy the basic contention runs something like this: The pattern of all our institutions is shaped by our economic credo. In this observation — which our modern political economy rejects — is the accusation that the power of money shapes human thought and achievements. But perhaps most men would agree that the progress and prosperity in the material realm of the entire social order depends on the strength of the modern banking system.

We move closer to the spiritual basis of life in the concept that the foundations of society are all the greater when want gives place, not to great possessions, but to the well-being of a nation's whole people. In a word, the strength of a na-

tion is not, in the long run, in a few great fortunes but in the social and economic stability of the many. It is here that the modern bank is more than a mere repository of money and more than a clearing-house. It is a social institution on whose strength, morality and appreciation of human values depend those two abstractions called "prosperity" and "progress".

"The past, rightly understood, is no mere past," wrote one of the greatest thinkers of the 19th century. Foundations precede superstructures. The pioneers laid the foundations: on them we build! Each thing we build should be a little better than what we built before. So it is not without reason that this bank celebrates both its past and its present and opens wide its portals to the future.

What the hand holds, by and large, is the future. To make it more than an unrealized dream is the supreme task of all its people. In their own hands is the future, both of its material and spiritual riches. A town can not be greater than its people; its strength is their strength; its progress is their vision; its happiness is born of their sense of justice and liberty of all.

